



Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span

Spring 2006
Volume 2, Issue 3

The Healthy Journey

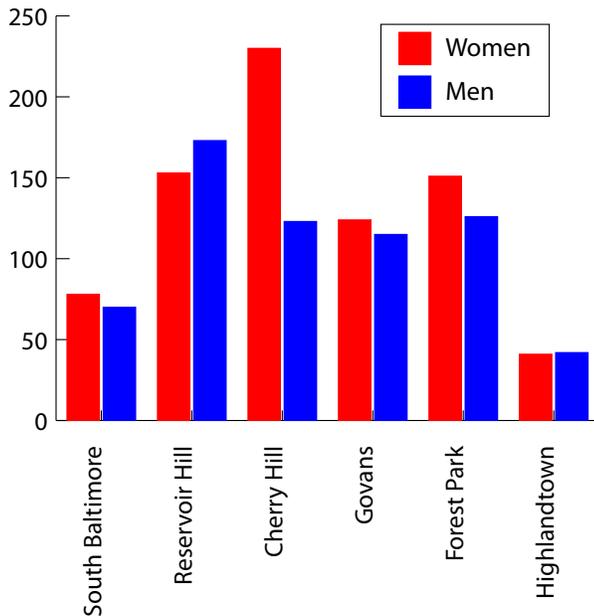
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HANDLS STUDY UPDATE

We began recruiting for the HANDLS study in August 2004 with a pilot in South Baltimore. After the pilot, we have recruited participants from the Reservoir Hill, Cherry Hill, Govans, and Forest Park neighborhoods. We are recruiting new participants in Highlandtown and surrounding neighborhoods. As of mid-April, HANDLS has added 1,425 participants, 1,095 African Americans, and 330 whites. The HANDLS clinical staff examined 956 participants on the mobile examination vehicles. This is about

67% of everyone who completed the home interview. At this point, we have recruited about 36% of the total number of participants we need for the study. The chart below shows the number of participants recruited by neighborhood and sex. The numbers of African Americans and whites is about what we expected because three of the four segments were predominately African-American communities.

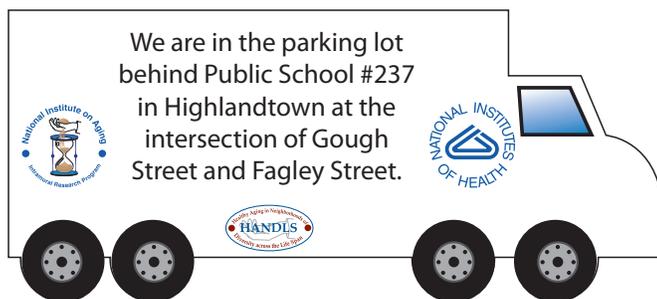


We have encountered some unexpected and uncontrollable challenges in enrolling participants and completing examinations in our medical vehicles. Barriers that have led to difficulty in meeting our timeline include shifts in the Baltimore City population since Census 2000, mechanical breakdowns in our vehicles, and a high rate of participants with health issues needing immediate medical attention before they can participate in the examination portion of the study.

Despite the challenges, we are very pleased with the progress of HANDLS and are indebted to the many community leaders, medical providers, scientists and individuals who have agreed to collaborate or participate in HANDLS.

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BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

It's a Girl

*Welcome to the newest member of the
HANDLS Family*

The HANDLS staff proudly congratulates Emmanuel and Ngozi Ejiogu on the arrival of "Lil Miss Chimeerem Amara" aka Amara whom graced us with her birth in October.



Chimeerem Amara

Born October 26, 2005, weighing in at 7 pounds 15 ounces and was 22.3 inches long. Her name Chimeerem Amara means "The Lord has shown his grace on me." Amara means "Grace." She is truly gracing the lives of her big sister Amaka and big brother Amanze.

FOCUS ON THE HANDLS STAFF

Rebecca Wilbur is a new addition to the HANDLS staff. She is the testing administrator for the emotions and feeling tests on our mobile examination vehicle. Her test incorporates measuring changes in heart rate and blood pressure while participants recall past experiences.

Rebecca Wilbur began her study of Physiological and Neuropsychology as an undergraduate of George Mason University in the Human Emotions Research Lab. There she studied jail inmates and measured their level of antisocial behavior, morality, and history of head injury. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, she worked as a psychiatric technician at Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute. Her experiences there further



Rebecca Wilbur

fueled her passion for psychology and she went on for a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology at Towson University.

During her graduate coursework at Towson University, Rebecca continued her research interests in clinical neuropsychology by collaborating with a professor and researcher at Towson University. Their research has most recently involved hope and recovery in traumatically brain injured patients. After graduating with her Master's degree, Rebecca began her physiological research with National Institute on Aging in the HANDLS project. She enthusiastically enjoys the HANDLS research and plans to pursue a doctorate degree in Clinical Psychology.

MOBILE EXAMINATION VEHICLE STAFF

Staff in front of our examination vehicle on a sunny spring day. From left to right in front, Clare Jefferson, Cardiovascular Technician; Kamala Foster, MD, Mary Sam-Nwoha, Registered Nurse; Bridget Cromwell, Community Coordinator; in back, (hidden) Mary Lassiter, Ultrasonographer; Angie Marshall, Security Officer; Angela Brown, Cognition Tester; and Leroy Lewis, Supervising Security Officer.



SPOTLIGHT ON PROBLEM SOLVING AND MEMORY TESTING

When you do these tests we measure how well you remember and solve different types of problems. We are interested in finding out how memory and problem solving ability changes as you get older. As you get older, we will look at the parts of memory and problem solving that change. We expect some types of memory and problem solving to change as you get older and some to stay the same. For example, as you get older, we expect some decline in your ability to remember things over short periods. We also expect a decline in your ability to manipulate that information in memory. We

Alzheimer's disease involves more than the normal memory change expected with aging

don't expect much decline in the words that you know. In fact, the number of words you know may increase as you get older.

In addition to our interest in changes in memory, we are also interested in finding when people start to have memory problems that might be a more serious problem. As they get older, some people develop dementia. The most common type of dementia in older people is Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's disease involves more than the normal memory change expected with aging. In Alzheimer's disease, there is damage to the nerve cells in all parts of the brain. The damage is permanent. Gradually, there is a decline in mem-

ory, thinking, decision-making, language, and the ability to control emotions and behaviors. By testing you many times over the next 20 years, we will find some people who may develop dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Our goal is to find out early, when disease just begins. Unfortunately, right now there is no cure for Alzheimer's disease and we don't know what causes it. But if we see it early enough there are medications that may help to slow it down.

How is the Problem Solving and Memory Testing performed?

In these tests, we ask you to remember words, numbers, and pictures. We also ask you to find similar words or to think of words beginning with certain letters or belonging to certain categories. We also ask you to imagine how objects look in different positions. Most of the tests are designed to be difficult and we don't expect you to get everything right all of the time. The best way that you can help us is to try your hardest on the tests. As long as you do your best then you are helping us measure change as you get older.

How long does it take?

The Problem Solving and Memory Tests take about an hour to complete. We designed the session so that we could test a variety of different types of memory and problem solving without making the session too long. Most people find that the session is just long enough to feel comfortable with the tasks, but not too long. We give these tests in a private, quiet room with a tester who will help you understand how to do the best you can.

RECIPES

We have two recipes this month that go well together.

Cajun Pork Roast

from the North Carolina Pork Council, Raleigh, North Carolina

Ingredients:

2 pounds boneless single loin pork roast

3 tablespoons paprika

½ teaspoon red pepper (cayenne)

1 tablespoon garlic powder

2 teaspoons oregano

2 teaspoons thyme

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon white pepper

½ teaspoon cumin

¼ teaspoon nutmeg

Directions:

Combine all seasonings and rub well over all surfaces of roast. Place roast in shallow pan and roast in 350°F oven for about an hour, until internal temperature is 155-160°F. Remove from oven, let rest 5-10 minutes before slicing.

Nutrient value:

Calories: 178

Protein: 27gm

Fat: 7gm

Sodium: 239mg

Cholesterol: 66mg

Kale and parsnips

from Pioneer Valley Growers Association

Serves 4

Ingredients:

1 cup onions, halved and sliced

1 cup parsnips, halved and sliced

1 tablespoon corn oil

1 cup water

2 tablespoons ginger, minced

1 quart. kale, veins removed and cut into bite-sized pieces

Directions:

Sauté the onions and parsnips in oil for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent burning. Add the water and ginger. Cover and simmer for 4 - 5 minutes. Add the kale and continue cooking 4 -5 minutes longer, stirring occasionally. Serve hot.

HANDLS WILL BE BACK SOONER THAN YOU THOUGHT

We invite you to take part in a second research study called *The association of personality and socioeconomic status with health status – An Interim HANDLS Follow-up Study*. This is a follow up study separate from the main HANDLS study. It is designed to occur between your first and second visits to the mobile Medical Research Vehicles.

About 1½ years after your first HANDLS visit, we will contact you by mail or phone. We will do this study in two parts. We may select you to participate in the first part only or both parts. Participation is optional. It will not affect your participation in the main HANDLS study. We will perform the study in your home or in a telephone interview. We will ask you to complete a few questionnaires. The entire study should take about an hour. The questionnaires will ask you about your personality and about any significant illnesses you had since your first examination on the Mobile Research Vehicle.

For the second part of this study, we will randomly select a smaller number of people who participated in the home interview. We will conduct the

second part of the study only over the phone. We will ask you to complete a dietary recall questionnaire that asks you to remember what you ate and drank in the last 24 hours. We will use pictures to help you give us information about how much food and drink you had in the last 24 hours. You may remember the dietary recall interview from your first home visit or your visit to the Mobile Research Vehicles. The difference for this study is that we will conduct the interview over the phone.

All of the questionnaires collect information about our research. They are not designed to improve your current health. We perform these questionnaires free of charge and we will pay participants.

Participant Contact Information Update

It is very important for us to have the most current contact information (address and phone number) for you so that we will be able to invite you to participate in this study and so that we may be able to send you information about your next Mobile Research Vehicle appointment. If you have moved or have a new phone number since your last visit, please call Jennifer Norbeck at 410-558-8622 to update your contact information.



HANDLS PARTICIPANTS

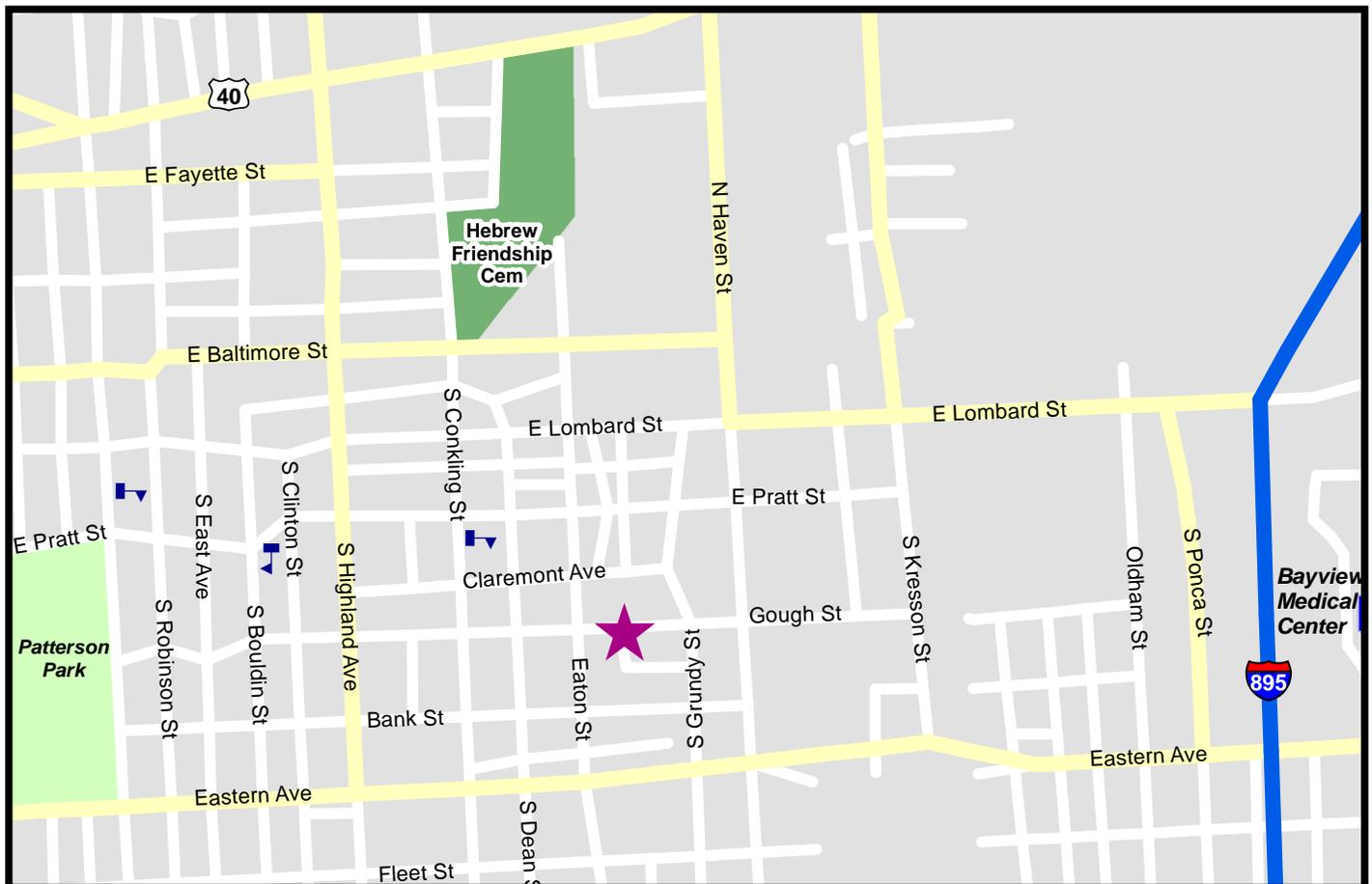
Have you moved? Are you planning to move?

You will notice we have included a change of address card with this newsletter. It is very important to us that we know exactly how to contact our participants. HANDLS is a longitudinal study. We will examine the same participants

approximately every 3 years over the next 20 years. Therefore, we ask that you remove the card from the newsletter and put it away so that if you do move, you can send us the post-card and we will know how to reach you. You may also call us toll-free at 1-866-207-8363, press option 7, and we will take your change of address information over the phone. Thank you so much for taking care to let us know how to stay in touch with you.

OUR PRESENT LOCATION

Our present location is in the parking lot behind Baltimore City Public School #237 on Gough Street and Fagley Street



★ The HANDLS mobile Medical Research Vehicles are at Gough St. and E. Fagley.

The Quarterly Newsletter for the HANDLS Community Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span

The purpose of this study is to learn about changes in health over time. Using our medical research vehicles, we want to study as many people with different backgrounds as we can. We want this study to help us understand healthy aging by examining the affects of different backgrounds on changes in health over time. The information that we gather will help improve health and prevent disabilities. We want to do this for people from all backgrounds, particularly those in poor and minority communities.

For information about our study call 1-866-207-8363
or visit our website hands.nih.gov



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